

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1. (Currently amended) A process for forming a steel sheet comprising the steps of:

- providing a slug of steel, said slug of steel being selected from the group consisting of austenitic 301 steel and austenitic 301N steel;
- reducing the thickness of said slug by passing said slug through a hot rolling mill while said slug is at a temperature of about 1000°C to about 1200°C, until said slug is formed into a steel sheet;
- quenching said steel sheet to lower the temperature of said steel sheet after hot rolling; and
- reducing the thickness of said steel sheet by passing said steel sheet in multiple passes through a cold rolling mill, said steel sheet being reduced between about 3% and about 13% in the last of its said passes through said cold rolling mill, the cold rolled steel sheet being resistant to hydrogen embrittlement and stress corrosion cracking.

Claim 2. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein said slug comprises austenitic 301 steel and said steel sheet after reducing the thickness said steel sheet by passing said steel sheet through said cold rolling mill has a tensile strength of at least about 90,000 psi, a yield strength of at least about 30,000 psi, and an elongation at break of at least about 30%.

Claim 3. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein said slug comprises austenitic 301N steel and said steel sheet after reducing the thickness said steel sheet by passing said steel sheet through said cold rolling mill has a tensile strength of at least about 95,000 psi, a yield strength of at least about 45,000 psi, and an elongation at break of at least about 40%.

Claim 4. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein said austenitic 301 steel consists essentially of by weight less than about 0.03% carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% sulfur, less than about 1.00% silicon, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron, and wherein said austenitic 301N steel consists essentially of by weight less than about 0.03% carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% phosphorous, less than about 1.00% silicon, less than about 0.30% nitrogen, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron.

Claim 5. (Original) The process of claim 1 wherein said steel sheet is reduced between about 5% and about 13% in the last of its said passes through said cold rolling mill.

Claim 6. (Original) The process as defined in claim 1 wherein said slug is passed through said hot rolling mill at a temperature of about 1100°C.

Claim 7. (Original) The process as defined in claim 1 further comprising pickling said steel sheet in an acid solution after quenching said steel sheet.

Claim 8. (Currently amended) A process for forming a steel sheet, said process comprising the steps of:

providing a slug of steel, said slug of steel being selected from the group consisting of austenitic 301 steel and austenitic 301N steel, wherein said austenitic 301 steel comprises by weight less than about 0.03% carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% phosphorous, less than about 1.00% silicon, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron, and wherein said austenitic 301N steel comprises by weight less than about 0.03%

carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% phosphorous, less than about 1.00% silicon, less than about 0.30% nitrogen, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron;

reducing the thickness of said slug by passing said slug through a hot rolling mill while said slug is at a temperature of about 1000°C to about 1200°C, until said slug is formed into a steel sheet;

quenching said steel sheet to lower the temperature of said steel sheet after hot rolling; and

reducing the thickness of said steel sheet by passing said steel sheet in multiple passes through a cold rolling mill, said steel sheet being reduced between about 5% and about 13% in the last of its said passes through said cold rolling mill, the cold rolled steel sheet being resistant to hydrogen embrittlement and stress corrosion cracking when welded.

Claim 9. (Withdrawn) A welded construction comprising a plurality of individual parts, a weld between said parts and joining them together, at least on of said welded parts comprising a steel sheet formed by the process of claim 1, said weld and a portion of said at least one of said welded parts adjacent said weld being resistant to hydrogen embrittlement and stress corrosion cracking.

Claim 10. (Withdrawn) The welded construction of claim 9 wherein said weld is formed by laser welding said parts.

Claim 11. (Withdrawn) The welded construction of claim 10 wherein said welded construction defines a chamber which is capable of storing an air bag inflation gas.

Claim 12. (New) The process of claim 1, said steel sheet being free of an annealing after reducing the thickness of the steel sheet in the cold rolling mill.

Claim 13. (New) A process for forming a steel sheet comprising the steps of:
providing a slug of steel, said slug of steel being selected from the group consisting of austenitic 301 steel and austenitic 301N steel;
hot rolling the slug at a temperature of about 1000°C to about 1200°C to form a steel sheet;
quenching the steel sheet to lower the temperature of the steel sheet after hot rolling; and
cold rolling the steel sheet by passing the steel sheet in multiple passes through a cold rolling mill, the steel sheet being reduced in thickness during the last of the passes through the cold rolling mill an amount effective to mitigate hydrogen embrittlement and stress corrosion cracking in the steel sheet when the steel sheet is welded.

Claim 14. (New) The process of claim 13, the steel sheet being free of an anneal after the cold rolling.

Claim 15. (New) The process of claim 13, the steel sheet being reduced in thickness during the last of the passes through the cold rolling mill between about 3% and about 13%.

Claim 16. (New) The process of claim 13, the slug comprising austenitic 301 steel and the steel sheet after reducing the thickness of the steel sheet by passing the steel sheet through the cold rolling mill having a tensile strength of at least about 90,000 psi, a yield strength of at least about 30,000 psi, and an elongation at break of at least about 30%.

Claim 17. (New) The process of claim 13 wherein the slug comprises austenitic 301N steel and the steel sheet after reducing the thickness of the steel sheet by passing the steel sheet through the cold rolling mill has a tensile strength of at least about 95,000 psi, a yield strength of at least about 45,000 psi, and an elongation at break of at least about 40%.

Claim 18. (New) The process of claim 13 wherein the austenitic 301 steel consists essentially of by weight less than about 0.03% carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% sulfur, less than about 1.00% silicon, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron, and wherein the austenitic 301N steel consists essentially of by weight less than about 0.03% carbon, less than about 2.00% manganese, less than about 0.005% sulfur, less than about 0.030% phosphorous, less than about 1.00% silicon, less than about 0.30% nitrogen, between about 16.00% and about 18.00% chromium, between about 6.00% and about 8.00% nickel, less than about 0.025% residual elements, and balance iron.

Claim 19. (New) The process of claim 13 wherein the steel sheet is reduced between about 5% and about 13% in the last of its passes through the cold rolling mill.